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*Gage, Nicholas*  
*SINATRA, FRANK*

*ORGANIZED CRIME*

*(orig under Gage)*

## Ex-Aides Say Justice Dept. Rejected a Sinatra Inquiry

By NICHOLAS GAGE

The Justice Department under Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy rejected or ignored repeated recommendations for a thorough investigation of Frank Sinatra and his relationships with Mafia leaders, according to former Federal officials.

They said that in May 1962, for example, the chief of the

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department's Organized Crime Section, Edwyn Silberling, recommended to Attorney General Kennedy a thorough tax investigation of Mr. Sinatra, but it was rejected.

Several other recommendations were made within the department in 1962 and 1963 for investigations of Mr. Sinatra, his contacts with Mafia figures and his relationship with Judith Campbell (now Mrs. Judith Exner), whom Mr. Sinatra introduced to both the late Sam Giancana, the Mafia boss of Chicago, and President Kennedy.

But department records show that while Mr. Sinatra was interviewed by Federal agents and was asked to submit some affidavits, no thorough investigation was ever conducted by the department on Mr. Sinatra's Mafia ties.

Some former Justice officials feel that evidence available at that time did not warrant such an inquiry, but others believe that there was a reluctance to pursue an extensive investigation because of Mr. Sinatra's close ties to the Kennedy family.

Mr. Sinatra, through a spokesman, declined to be interviewed by The New York Times.

The rejected recommendations for investigation were disclosed in a two-month investigation by The New York Times of Mr. Giancana and John Roselli, another Mafia figure, and their relationships with Mr. Sinatra and Mrs.

Campbell, after the disclosure that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence had looked into Mrs. Campbell's friendships with the President and the Mafia men.

From the beginning of his career as an entertainer, Mr. Sinatra never tried to hide his friendships with such Mafia figures as Willie Moretti, Rocco and Joseph Fischetti (cousins of Al Capone, Mr. Roselli and Mr. Giancana (who was murdered last June), according to law-enforcement officials who have traced his Mafia ties.

### Worked for Kennedy

While maintaining such relationships, Mr. Sinatra, beginning in 1960, developed strong ties to the Kennedy family by working zealously in the primary and Presidential campaigns of John F. Kennedy. He stumped with the future President, persuaded Hollywood personalities to work for him, solicited contributions and, after the election, staged an inaugural gala that raised \$1.4 million to help pay off the Democratic Party's campaign debts.

Soon after Mr. Sinatra became involved in Mr. Kennedy's primary campaign, the singer introduced the candidate to a former girlfriend, Judith Campbell, who later said that the introduction led to an affair with Mr. Kennedy.

There have been suggestions since the relationship was disclosed last December that Mr. Sinatra was, as Mrs. Campbell's outline for a proposed book speculates, "attempting to set up a connection" for the Mafia, because a few weeks later he also introduced her to Mr. Giancana.

### No Evidence Found

The investigation by The Times, however, has found no evidence of that.

Mr. Giancana and other Mafia leaders close to Mr. Sinatra were under heavy electronic surveillance by Federal agents during this period, and although they talked uninhibitedly about themselves, the Mafia and Mrs. Campbell, they did not indicate that Mr. Sinatra was ingratiating himself with the Kennedys in their behalf.

In fact, they complained that they were under more pressure from Federal law enforcement after Robert Kennedy became Attorney General than before.

But the Times investigation did produce evidence that the Justice Department under Attorney General Kennedy resisted a thorough investigation of Mr. Sinatra's Mafia ties.

Justice Department documents, as well as former officials, indicate that although the department pursued investigations of Mafia leaders close to the entertainer, recommendations for an investigation of Mr. Sinatra himself were rejected or ignored.

Mr. Silberling, in a memorandum to the Attorney General on May 18, 1962, wrote that his section intended to begin a thorough tax investigation of Mr. Sinatra, based on material attached to the memo, but would take no action until Mr. Kennedy had had the opportunity to consider the matter.

### 'Makes Sense to Me'

The memorandum was sent through Deputy Attorney General Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, who wrote on it in longhand that the investigation "makes sense to me."

The memorandum was then forwarded to the Attorney General's office. It was stamped "Received" on May 19 and was initialed by Mr. Kennedy himself.

On June 14, Mr. Silberling was called by Herbert J. Miller, the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division, and told that a broad tax investigation could not be initiated against Mr. Sinatra and that only specific items could be checked, according to former Justice officials.

Mr. Silberling, who is now practicing law here, said that he had only a faint recollection of the memorandum, which was written 14 years ago, but he said that the path it followed

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